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Egypt E-Alert

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Minister of Communications and Information Technology Dr. Tarek Kamel and Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Dr. Hani Helal announced today that Egypt had signed up to acquire the first Arabic domain name suffixed "misy."

According to Kamel, Egypt is the first Arab nation to apply for a non-Latin character domain. The effort is part of a broader push to expand both access and content in developing nations, where the Internet remains out of reach for wide swaths of the population. Domain names ended by ".misy" will then be available on search engines for Internet users to find.

"It is a great moment for us," Kamel said of the domain name, which translates as "Egypt".

The registering of the domain "will offer new avenues for innovation, investment and growth, and hence we can truly and gladly say ... the Internet now speaks Arabic," Kamel said at the start of the Internet Governance Forum — a U.N. - sponsored gathering that drew Net legends like Yahoo! Inc.'s Jerry Yang and Tim Berners-Lee, known as one of the Internet's founding fathers.

The new domains stem from a decision taken at the end of October by the board of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers, a key Internet oversight agency, to develop a "fast-track" mechanism for domain names in languages such as Chinese, Korean, Arabic and others that do not use the Latin alphabet.

Yang said that while there are over 300 million Arabic speakers in the world, less than 1 percent of the content online is in Arabic.

The challenge "isn't just about getting as many people online as possible, but making sure that once they get online, they have something productive to do, something to gain, something meaningful to experience."

To read the November 15th AP article, please click [here](#).

To read the press release put out by the Egypt Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, please click [here](#).

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